

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 AEC-11 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00

CIEP-02 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-11 FEA-02 FPC-01 H-03

INR-10 INT-08 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 OMB-01 PM-07 RSC-01

SAM-01 SCI-06 SP-03 SS-20 STR-08 TRSE-00 COA-02

DLOS-07 DRC-01 PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15 /190 W

----- 104694

R 211155Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8170

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KHARTOUM 1109

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR, EMIN, SU, SA, XF

SUBJ: SAUDI OIL MINISTER VISITS SUDAN: SEABED AGREEMENT
SIGNED

1. SAUDI OIL MINISTER SHEIKH AHMED ZAKI AL-YAMANI
LEFT KHARTOUM FOR JIDDA MAY 17 AFTER COMPLETING TWO
DAY VISIT. HIGHLIGHTS OF STAY (ALL COVERED BY FBIS)
INCLUDED MEETING WITH PRESIDENT NIMEIRI DURING WHICH
PRESS REPORTS YAMANI DELIVERED PRIVATE MESSAGE FROM
KING FAISAL; PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH HE DISCUSSED
AMONG OTHER POINTS EFFECTIVENESS OF OIL EMBARGO, AND
LIFTING THEREOF, IN "INDUCING US...TO SERIOUSLY AND
EFFECTIVELY CONTRIBUTE TOWARD FINDING PEACEFUL SOLUTION
OF ARAB QUESTION"; AND SIGNING OF AGREEMENT FOR JOINT
EXPLORATION OF SEABED RESOURCES IN RED SEA. LATTER
AGREEMENT CLEARLY INVOLVES SO-CALLED "HOT BRINE DEPTHS"
(KHARTOUM A-47, MAY 18, 1972) WHICH HAVE LONG BEEN VIEWED
AS SOURCE HOPED-FOR MINERAL WEALTH. ACCORDING DETAILS
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OF AGREEMENT AS RELEASED IN SUDANESE PRESS MAY 20, GOS

APPEARS HAVE MADE CONCESSION TO SAG BY DECLARING ALL AREAS BEYOND ONE THOUSAND METERS DEPTH OFF RESPECTIVE COASTS TO BE "COMMON ZONE" TO WHICH BOTH COUNTRIES WILL SHARE RIGHTS. IT OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT "HOT BRINES" PROBABLY LIE IN THIS COMMON AREA, WHILE, HAD MEDIAN LINE BEEN USED, AREAS OF BEST POTENTIAL WOULD HAVE BEEN ON SUDANESE SIDE. GOS REPORTEDLY MADE THIS CONCESSION DURING WORKING LEVEL DISCUSSIONS LAST SUMMER, NO DOUBT REFLECTING PART OF GOS EFFORT IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH SAUDIS IN HOPES FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, HOPES WHICH HAVE NOW BEEN REALIZED. IN ADDITION, SINCE AGREEMENT PROVIDES THAT SAG WILL FURNISH FUNDS FOR JOINT COMMISSION WHICH WILL SEEK EXPLOIT AREA, GOS UNDOUBTEDLY FELT THIS INCREASED CHANCE OF ACTUALLY REALIZING RETURN FROM THIS RESOURCE WHICH WORTH IT EVEN AT COST SHARING PROFIT.

2. COMMENT: WHILE THIS VISIT ORIGINALLY MENTIONED IN PRESS SEVERAL MONTHS AGO, IT APPEARED IT WOULD FOCUS ON SUDAN'S PETROLEUM NEEDS AND COST THEREOF. WITH SUDAN HAVING SINCE RESOLVED THIS PROBLEM THROUGH AGREEMENT WITH IRAN (ALTHOUGH WE UNDERSTAND AGREEMENT NOT YET FINALLY

WORKED OUT), VISIT WAS APPARENTLY LARGELY ONEOF GOOD WILL, REFLECTING CONTINUING PATTERN CLOSE RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES. RED SEA AGREEMENT DOES REMOVE LONG STANDING POINT CONTENTION, BUT, EVEN WITH SAUDI FINANCIAL BACKING, IT OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT TECHNOLOGY NEEDED EXPLOIT THIS RESOURCE STILL NOT FULLY DEVELOPED AND HENCE SUBSTANTIAL RETURN STILL SOME TIME AWAY.
BREWER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SEABED, AGREEMENTS, PETROLEUM, TREATY SIGNATURE, PRESS CONFERENCES, EMBARGOES, PEACE PLANS, EXPLOITATION (NATURAL RESOURCES), PROFIT SHARING, MINING CONCESSIONS, GOODWILL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974KHARTO01109
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740126-0238
From: KHARTOUM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740531/aaaabbbn.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 AUG 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <26 FEB 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SAUDI OIL MINISTER VISITS SUDAN: SEABED AGREEMENT SIGNED
TAGS: PBOR, EMIN, SU, SA, XF, FBIS, (FAISAL, KING)
To: STATE TEHRAN
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005